

CDS presents Screenagers Next Chapter: Uncovering Skills for Stress Resilience

Written By MARK PAVILONS

Visit King's Country Day School for a free screening of Screenagers Next Chapter: Uncovering Skills for Stress Resilience on Thursday, Nov. 28 at 7 p.m. in the school's Paul C. Duckett Theatre. The film is 69 minutes in length and there will be an opportunity to discuss and share reactions following the screening.

Filmmaker and physician Dr. Delaney Ruston takes the conversation around screens and teens to the next level with Screenagers Next Chapter. The film examines the science behind teens' emotional challenges, the interplay of social media, and most importantly, what can be done in our schools and homes to help them build crucial skills to navigate stress, anxiety, and depression in our digital age.

Screenagers: Growing up in the Digital Age is Delaney Ruston's award-winning 2016 film as the first feature documentary to explore the impact of screen technology on kids and offer parents and families proven solutions. Screened more than 8,000 times (and counting) to 4 million people in more than 70 countries, it has been featured on PBS NewsHour, the Today Show, Good Morning America, Dr. Oz, the New York Times, the Washington Post, and more. What started as a personal story grew into a national movement, helping millions of youth and their families find their way in a world with instant access to screen time.

In Screenagers Next Chapter, we follow Delaney as she finds herself at a loss on how to help her own teens as they struggle with their emotional wellbeing. She sets out to understand these challenges in our current screen-filled society, and how we, as parents and educators, can empower teens to overcome mental health challenges and build emotional agility, communication savvy, and stress resilience.

We witness Delaney as she finds her way from ineffective parenting to much-improved strategies. We follow other personal stories of families from an array of backgrounds with a spectrum of emotional challenges. We also observe approaches in schools that provide strategies relevant beyond the classroom setting. Interwoven into the stories are surprising insights from brain researchers, psychologists, and thought leaders that reveal evidence-based ways to support mental wellness among our youth.

The impact of social media and other screen time is incorporated in all the topics raised in Screenagers Next Chapter, how it may be impacting our teens' mental health, and what we can do to help foster youth in the face of struggles.

Facts from the film include:

• Since 2011, there has been a 59% increase in teens reporting depressive symptoms.

• Scientific data shows that 2+ hours a day on social media correlates with a higher chance of having unhappy feelings.

• Teens say their main way of coping with stress is to turn to a screen. This is concerning for many reasons and we need to ensure they have other coping skills.

• Some schools are implementing innovative programs, such as wellness clubs, where teens teach their peers essential communication skills, like conflict resolution and relationship building.

• State of the art therapies, including mindfulness, exposure therapy, and behavior activation, are being used to successfully treat anxiety and depression and yet many teens and adults don't know that these proven interventions exist.

• Just like toddlers' brains are primed to learn languages, teenage brains are primed for learning skills to navigate complicated emotions

Screenagers Next Chapter shows many ways parents, counselors, and educators can help teens build crucial skills for navigating stress, anxiety, and depression.

Delaney Ruston is a filmmaker, Stanford-trained physician, and mother of two. Before directing Screenagers and Screenagers Next Chapter, she made several award-winning films through her company, MyDoc Productions. Delaney has been invited to screen her films and be a guest presenter to hundreds of audiences worldwide, from school age children to The United Nations, Google, Facebook, Harvard, and TEDX.

Screenagers uses a model of distribution where the film is seen only in community settings. Screenagers' reach over 3.5 years is considered in the industry to be the most successful community distribution effort for a documentary film ever. This distribution model brings parents, kids, teens, and educators together to start a conversation about how screen time impacts their lives and what they can do about it. It is primarily shown in schools, churches, synagogues, community centres, and the like.